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RESOLUTIONS

EARNESTLY SUBMITTED

TO THE ATTENTION OF

THE SEVERAL ASSOCIATIONS WHICH MAY BE ENTERED INTO THROUGHOUT THE KINGDOM,

IN FURTHERANCE OF

HIS MAJESTY's MOST GRACIOUS

PROCLAMATION,

RECOMMENDING

FRUGALITY & ECONOMY

IN

THE CONSUMPTION OF EVERY SPECIES OF

GRAIN.

WITH CURSORY REMARKS.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF "AN APPEAL TO THE GOOD SENSE OF THE HIGHER AND WEALTHY ORDERS OF THE PEOPLE," *&c.*

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AS the Committee of the Houſe of Commons, appointed to take into conſideration ſo much of His Majeſty's Speech as relates to the high price of proviſions, have expreſſed, in their firſt report on the ſubject referred to them, their ſtrong expectation of the good effect likely to enſue from the ſeveral aſſociations which may be entered into throughout the kingdom, in furtherance of His Majeſty's Royal Proclamation recommending frugality and economy, after the ſame ſhould be iſſued; the following Reſolutions, grounded upon the reaſons ſubjoined in ſupport of them, are moſt earneſtly ſubmitted to the conſideration of the higher and wealthy orders of the people: the ſole object of them being to point out the beſt means of leaving to the poor and diſtreſſed part of the community, thoſe articles of neceſſary ſupport, which no man of common ſenſe can ſet a real value upon whilſt he has any thing elſe to eat, and which no man of common feeling can deſire to have, at the coſt of one moment's want to the poor and indigent.

RESOLUTION I.

To abſtain from the uſe of Bread made of *Pure Wheaten Flour*, commonly called *Fine Houſholds*; and alſo from Bread made with any mixture of ſuch *Pure Wheaten Flour*; and to uſe ſuch Bread only as is made of the *Whole Flour*, that is to ſay, of the Flour of Wheat from which the *Bran* only is taken, commonly called *Standard Wheaten Flour*, or Bread made of a mixture of ſuch Standard Wheaten Flour, with the Flour of Barley, Oats, Rice, or other Grain.

OBSERVATIONS.

The public, perhaps, are not generally informed of the great ſaving which every individual would himſelf make in the conſumption of wheat, under the preſent ſcarcity, by eating the *Standard Wheaten Bread*, in preference to the *London White Bread*, now in common uſe.

According to a variety of experiments made by the moſt reſpectable and well-informed individuals upon this ſubject, and proved by them in their examination before the Lords of the

Privy Council, on occaſion of the ſcarcity in the year 1795; and before the Committee of the Houſe of Commons in the laſt Seſſion of Parliament, the ſaving, according to the loweſt eſtimate, would amount to *one-eleventh* part of every man's whole conſumption; which, upon fifty-two weeks in the year, is a ſaving of nearly *five* weeks; and according to the higheſt eſtimate, founded on ſome of thoſe experiments, the ſaving would be *one-ninth* part, or nearly *ſix* weeks of every man's preſent conſumption. The aggregate ſaving upon this latter calculation, as appears by a very ſenſible pamphlet, lately publiſhed by a noble author *, would amount to no leſs than 269,423 quartern loaves daily, or 1,885,961 loaves weekly; a ſaving equal to what the whole conſumption of the nobility and gentry, and their ſervants, who have plenty of other food to eat (for they cannot exceed 1,885,961 ſouls), ought to be for a whole year, even under the liberal allowance permitted by his Majeſty's Royal Proclamation; but which allowance, as will be hereafter ſhewn, appears to be much too great.

Who then, that feels, as every body muſt feel, for the poor, under their preſent diſtreſs, let

* Lord Sheffield's "Remarks on the Deficiency of Grain," &c.

the cauſe of the ſcarcity be what it may, can heſitate to abridge himſelf of the little *imaginary indulgence* that can ariſe either to his eye-ſight or his palate, from having white bread at his table inſtead of brown? Of the wholeſomeneſs of the Standard Wheaten Bread, no one can doubt: for it was in general uſe by the labouring poor, long before white bread became the univerſal food of the London labourer and mechanic. It is ſtill the common food of the poor in country villages, where any of them have an oven to their cottage; in which caſe, as often as they can, they buy their own wheat, and carry it to the mill to be ground, but never dream of ordering it to be made into *Pure White Flour*. So with reſpect to their gleanings—Who ever heard of a poor perſon ordering the miller to make their gleanings into *Pure White Flour?* No; they have nothing taken out but the *bran*, which leaves what is called the *Whole Flour*, and which makes the *Old Standard Wheaten Bread*, ſo called from its having immemorially been in uſe in this country *.

It is the baker who, of late time, has brought the *Fine Wheaten Bread* into ſuch general uſe; not perhaps improperly on his part, but naturally; becauſe the aſſize, by miſtake, is ſo ſet by

* See the preamble to the Statute, 13 Geo. III. c. 62.

law, with reſpect to the Standard Wheaten Bread, that he would be a loſer by baking it. It was not likely, therefore, from the period when the above regulation took place, that, in times of plenty, the baker ſhould put himſelf forward to give the Standard Wheaten Bread the preference, which, if he had had the turn of the ſcale in his favour upon baking it, he would have done. But the conſequence of his doing the contrary, and forbearing to bake it, from the turn of the ſcale being againſt him, has been that of its falling, in the mean time, into general diſuſe, and by degrees eſtabliſhing a preference to *White Bread* amongſt the lower orders of the people in the metropolis and other great towns, founded ſolely in the prejudice of habit.

The moſt effectual remedy for this unforeſeen difficulty ſeems to be, for the legiſlature to paſs a law prohibiting, for a limited time, the making of *Fine Wheaten Flour*, or any other Flour from *Wheat* but what has the Bran only taken from it; and to make a recompenſe to the miller and baker for their loſs, if any, by ſuch regulation. The act ſhould contain an exception with reſpect to contracts to be entered into by individuals for ſerving the navy and merchants with biſcuit.

RESOLUTION II.

To abſtain from the uſe of Wheaten Flour, and from Bread *altogether*, *except at breakfaſt*, or *under ſickneſs*. And for this purpoſe not to conſume more than *one* quartern loaf for every *two* perſons in a family, or half a quartern loaf per head per week; and further, to abſtain from Paſtry made with any Wheaten Flour.

OBSERVATIONS.

It is a notorious fact, to thoſe who have taken the trouble to make the inquiry, that, in general, the hard-working poor in country villages, and who have ſcarce any thing beſides Bread for their common food, do not conſume more than at the rate of one quartern loaf and an half per head per week. The writer of theſe obſervations, ~~upon occaſion of the ſcarcity of Wheat~~ in the year 1795, reſided in a pariſh where the poor, who conſiſted of 300 in number, were deſired to deliver in an account of the quantity of loaves which each family conſumed in a week: they were informed, at the ſame time, that the object of this inquiry was to give

each of them credit at the baker's or chandler's ſhop with which they dealt for bread, for one-fourth part of their uſual conſumption, which they were to have *gratis*. Nothing could be more thankful than they were for this indulgence; and though of courſe, it was their intereſt to give in as large a quantity of loaves as they could conſume, it appeared upon the return made, that the average throughout the pariſh did not exceed one quartern loaf and an half per head per week—men, women, and children included. This ſupplied them with three meals a day—breakfaſt, dinner, and ſupper. But, ſuppoſing the average had been two quartern loaves to each perſon, can it be neceſſary for the wealthier orders of the people, and their ſervants, who have plenty of other food, to conſume in a week, and for *one* meal—their breakfaſt (for they need not eat bread at dinner or ſupper)—more than one fourth of what the poor man conſumes at three meals, after working at hard labour for a whole day?

But the important point of all is the retrenchment requiſite to be made by ſervants, who, in many great families, are in the proportion of 7, 8, 9, and 10 to one of their maſter and miſtreſs. If the reſtriction on their part, therefore, is not to the extent in which their maſter and miſtreſs

put it in practice, which it is much to be feared is not the case at present, what good can be expected from the saving above stairs compared to the drawback from the still unreasonable consumption below, namely, one quartern loaf per head per week, the full extent of the allowance under the Royal Proclamation? How mistaken will such indulgence, if continued, be on the part of the master and mistress!—but how more mistaken the unthinking servant, not to stand forward on such an occasion, and, in gratitude for the indulgence of being hitherto left to his own choice, voluntarily to follow the example set him in its fullest extent, and thereby afford a double proof of his fidelity and respect to his master, and his compassion and consideration for the poor!

RESOLUTION III.

To abstain from Soup, Made-dishes, and Cheese.

OBSERVATIONS.

The two first of the articles here stated are *luxuries*, which, at present interfere most materially with what is necessary for the relief of the poor, by consuming the coarse parts of meat, so much wanted for the soups which have been found so beneficial a substitute for bread, and on the utility of which the general experience of them throughout the kingdom makes it quite

unneceſſary to enlarge in this place. The latter is not only a mere luxury to the rich, but one that no one can enjoy without bread: conſequently one which ought altogether to be given up at this time, as the only means of lowering the price. But to the poor it may juſtly be conſidered as a neceſſary; becauſe heretofore it not only made a part of one of their ſcanty meals—their dinner, but it helped to make that ſcanty meal palatable. It was then (not a year and a half ago) from 3*d.* to 3*d.* halfpenny per pound; it is now riſen to 10*d.* and 11*d.* putting the purchaſe of it entirely out of their reach. Who, then, that has eaten a hearty dinner would not, moſt cheerfully relinquiſh this, his *ſupernumerary* though *accuſtomed* reliſh, to add this little mite of comfort to the labourer?

RESOLUTION IV.

To petition the two Houſes of Parliament to paſs a Law further reſtricting the conſumption of Bread in ſuch manner as may be found fully ſufficient to meet the difficulties ariſing from the preſent ſcarcity of Corn.

OBSERVATIONS.

The moderation and caution of the Repreſentatives of the People, and of the Members of the Upper Houſe of Parliament, under an anxious ſolicitude on the one hand to relieve the diſtreſſes of the Poor in the preſent moment of urgency and preſſure; and, on the other hand, to avoid propoſing any meaſure that

might bear the ſemblance of compulſion in reſpect of the ſacrifice to be made by the higher and more opulent orders of the People, was never more conſpicuous than in the language of the ſeveral Reports made by the reſpective Committees of the two Houſes of Parliament, appointed to take into conſideration the high price of proviſions, and in the terms of the joint Addreſs of both Houſes to His Majeſty, requeſting that His Majeſty would be graciouſly pleaſed "to iſſue His Royal Proclamation, recommending the greateſt frugality and economy in the uſe of every ſpecies of grain." This moderate and conſiderate ſtep on their part, and His Majeſty's moſt gracious acquieſcence, ſanctioned by his illuſtrious example, ſurely deſerves the warmeſt gratitude and thanks of every man, who has the happineſs to reflect that he is a Britiſh ſubject. Does not that gratitude, then, dictate to every feeling and generous breaſt, the only proper and ſuitable return to be made for ſuch moderation, namely, a free and voluntary petition on the part of the higher and wealthy orders of the people to Parliament, TO HAVE THE RULE OF THEIR CONDUCT LAID DOWN AND PRESCRIBED BY LAW: THAT ALL WHO HAVE THE MEANS OF RELIEVING THE POOR MAY EQUALLY CONTRIBUTE TO SO DESIRABLE AN OBJECT. The ſhadow of compulſion at the motion of a Miniſter may naturally (though, at ſuch a moment as this, it ought not to do ſo) create a jealouſy and ſuſpicion. But at the *requeſt* of thoſe who only deſire to bind *themſelves and their domeſtics*, and to leave the *poor entirely free* from the particular reſtriction to be impoſed,

ſuch a phantom muſt, as it ought to do, inſtantly vaniſh. It will not only do ſo, but when the poor know and ſee that the rich ſtand forward to *bind themſelves* for *their* ſakes, they will ſit down quietly and contentedly under any parliamentary regulation that may be neceſſary, even in reſpect of themſelves. Whereas at preſent they are open to every miſrepreſentation that malignity and wickedneſs may deviſe; and to this worſt of all ſeducing language; "You ſee the rich are left to their option, but you are controlled by a law."

With reſpect to the abſolute neceſſity of a further reſtriction in the conſumption of Bread, than what is enjoined by His Majeſty's Royal Proclamation, it is notorious that heretofore, in times even of the greateſt plenty, no economical maſter or miſtreſs of a family ever thought of allowing a greater conſumption of Bread than one quartern loaf per head, per week; and, no doubt, there are hundreds of moſt reſpectable gentlemen's families, whoſe practice is ſtill conformable to thoſe days of prudence and frugality. It is but too true, however, that an extravagant and *unheeded* conſumption of Bread has crept in of late years in almoſt all families, and more eſpecially in thoſe of the higher ranks; and from that, amongſt other cauſes, it is, that the growth of Corn in this country is ſo much more inadequate than it uſed to be to its general conſumption. How, then, in a time of ſcarcity like the preſent, is the deficiency to be made up, by *only returning* to what *was* and therefore *ought to be*, our economy in a year of plenty? —It cannot be: and, if a *much greater* reduction

is not *generally made*, the miſchief may not only not be removed, but may increaſe.

The great obſtacles to its becoming general, but by means of a poſitive law on the ſubject, are, 1ſt. The bad example of the ſupine, who, from inactivity, and not from ill-intention, are evermore a dead weight in the ſcale of all obſtruction. 2dly. The more dangerous, becauſe the more active example of thoſe, who with equally good intentions reaſon falſely, from the conviction in their own minds that the *ſcarcity* is not *real* but *fictitious*. Such are the premiſes they lay down, and the concluſion they draw is, that "therefore they ſee no reaſon why they ſhould abridge themſelves of what they have been uſed to, for the ſake of monopolizers, foreſtallers, and regraters." At the ſame time, to prove their humanity and conſideration for the poor to be as ſincere as that of their opponents, who contend there is a real ſcarcity, they declare "That if they could be convinced there *was* a real ſcarcity, they would leave off Bread to-morrow: but they do not believe it, and therefore they wiſh all the monopolizers &c. were puniſhed to the utmoſt extremity of the law." So do their opponents. Both unite, therefore, in one common ſentiment and earneſt deſire, namely, To relieve the poor, and puniſh the monopolizer. Whoſe conduct then, is it ſuppoſed, will be beſt calculated to attain this deſirable end? The conduct of thoſe, who, by abſtaining from a great portion of their uſual conſumption of Bread, will leave the remainder for the poor, and, by lowering the price of Corn, at the ſame time diſappoint the avarice of the monopolizer? or the conduct of thoſe, who, by

continuing to consume their former usual quantity of Bread, necessarily must add to the distresses of the poor, whose wants they commiserate, and, by enhancing the price of Corn, at the same time enrich the monopolizer, whose avarice they would wish to disappoint, and whom they are also desirous to punish?—The answer is obvious. But, good God! what is become of the manliness or feeling of this spirited and generous nation? What hardship would it be for the rich and their servants not to taste bread for the next ten or twelve months? And what would be the effect upon the next market at the Corn Exchange, if every family, not only from one end of the metropolis to the other, but throughout the kingdom, that could afford to keep one man servant, were at the end of the week to tell their baker to bring no more Bread to their house for a twelvemonth? If there *be* MONOPOLY, would not this make the monopolizer tremble and look pale? If on the contrary, as it now seems established, it has been the WILL OF PROVIDENCE to inflict upon us a *real scarcity*, what would be the inward satisfaction of every humble heart and mind, to reflect, that, in submission to the divine correction, all that had been permitted to be enjoyed by a sinful nation was left and resigned to the poor? And what would the poor man feel? What God means the poor should find in the rich man —that he is his real friend! It must strike every one that such a step would be instantaneously effectual in the present emergency: in its example the best check against all mal-practices in future times, and its impression on the poor such as never

could be forgotten. Would to God it may be adopted! If not, without some compulsory law, though less extensive in its operation, little or no good can be expected from partial retrenchment. If made less general than the above, it is said—Where can the line be drawn? Answer—By the line of visible expenditure; and by a law making it penal for every family, where more than *one* man servant is kept, or where there are three or more maid servants (and no manservant), to consume more than at the rate of one quartern loaf to every *two* persons, children and the sick excepted. But would not this be *nibbling*, compared to the more manly measure of relinquishing bread altogether?

N. B. Bread has risen, even since the Royal Proclamation, one half assize!

December 15*th*, 1800.

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